

# Alpenglow Timber CUP – Appeal

**Nevada County Board of Supervisors**

***October 8, 2024***



## Owner & Team Introduction

**Mr. David Mercer**, Owner / Applicant

**Mr. Gavin Ball**, Consulting Land Use Planner

**Mr. Robert Hodil**, Coblenz Patch Duffy & Bass LLP

**Mrs. Leslie Suen**, LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.

**Mr. Dan Jones**, RCH Group

**Mr. Tim Ferrell**, Ferrell Civil Engineering

**Mr. Rex Crayne**, Saxelby Acoustics

**Mrs. Pamala Raynak & Mrs. Heidi Cummings**, NV5, Inc.

**Mr. Dennis Dodds**, Dodds and Associates, Inc.

**Mrs. Regine Miller**, Headwaters Environmental

**Mr. Albert Garner**, Far Western Anthropological, Inc.

**Mr. Geoff Cline**, Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group

**Mr. Peter Demattei**, Precision Design Consulting



## Project & Property Introduction

**What it is** – innovative and a model

**Where it came from** – need, benefit, design and pre-mitigate approach

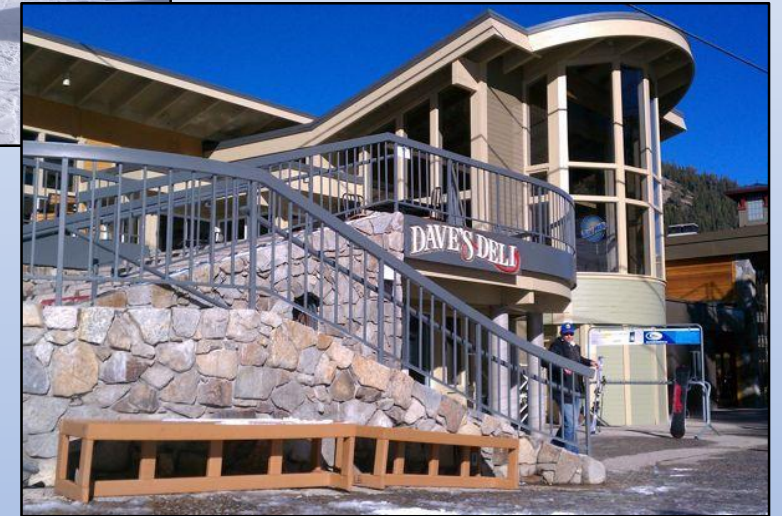
**Why Planning Commission Approval** – consistent, conforming, fully mitigated, supported and trusted

**Appeal** – without merit and unsupported

**Fact-based** – information, data, analysis & conclusions



## Mr. David Mercer – Owner / Applicant



- Born in Tahoe City, raised in Olympic Valley
- Both parents owned and operated local businesses
- Worked in the forest for 35 years
- Cross Check Services for 20 years

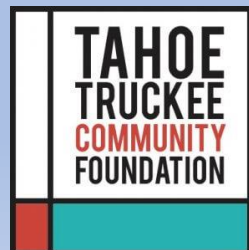
**My goal is, and has always been for us to be the best stewards of the land and community that we can, and provide sustainable, economically viable, quality forest restoration services while caring for my family, my employees, your families, our unique community and our natural ecosystem.**



## Community, Industry, Agency Partners & Supporters



Northern Sierra Partnership






## Ground-Based Low Impact Forest Restoration



**CROSSCHECK**  
services



ALPENGLOW  TIMBER



## What We Do





## What We Do





## What it is – More Than a Sawmill

- **Forest restoration & sawmill project** – mutually beneficial
- **Integrated** – sustainable and efficient bio-mass thermal energy
- **Modestly-scaled** – not SPI sawmill, not 400+ log trucks per day
- **Efficient & innovative** – modern technology that best utilizes small logs efficiently
- **Site & Safety Improvements** – infrastructure (fire protection), drainage & access
- **Local** – conceived, owned and operated
- **Sustainable** – Sized to our community and surrounding forests
- **Project Goal** – Help advance forest health and reduce wildfire hazard
- **End Result** – help protect our community and region



## Where it Came From – Project Need & Benefits

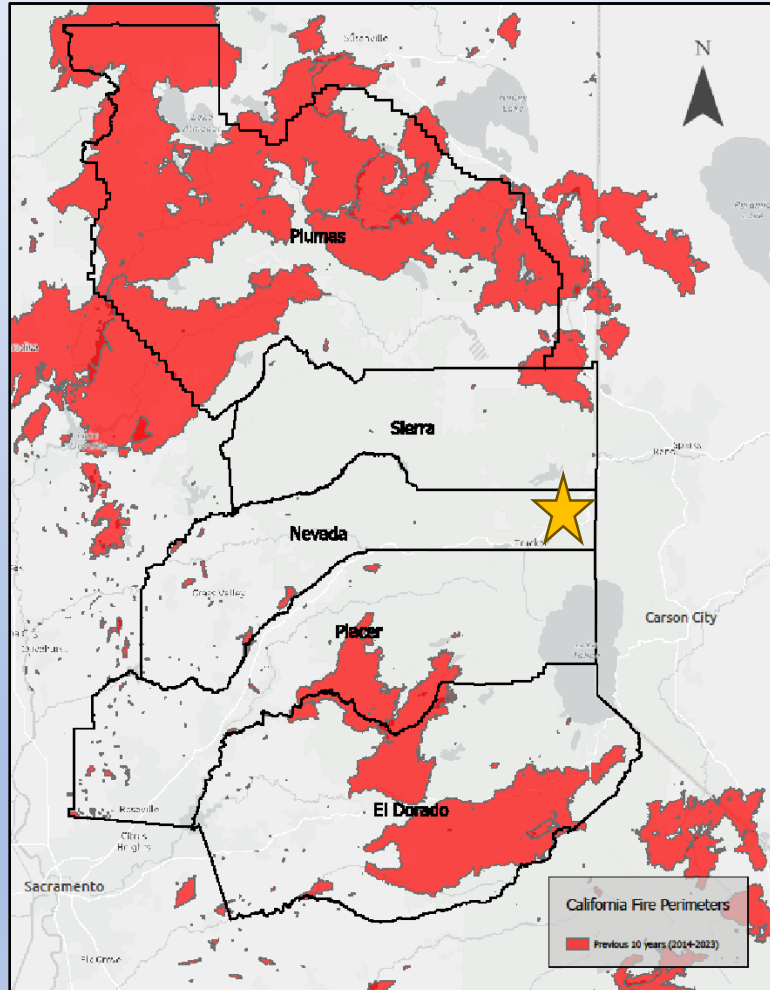
- **Lack of local Infrastructure** – compromises regional forest health and community protection
- **Unreliable & distant outlet** – SPI in Lincoln and Quincy
- **Wildfire risk & mitigation** – more than ‘risk’: inevitable forest fire, catastrophic or healthy
- **Healthy & resilient forests** – end goal and result
- **Forest restoration** – 5-6 acres per day (1,500 acres/year)
- **Demand** – lumber + ‘value-added’ wood products
- **Maximize log use & minimize waist** – efficient and reduce net impact
- **VMT Reduction** – no transport to Lincoln, Quincy, or other facilities further away
- **Economic Benefit** – \$5.4M annually + \$712k related (\$270M + \$35M over life of project)
- **Jobs** – 10 FTEE and 15+ indirectly
- **Housing** – employees + families
- **County/State/Federal Goals** – forest health, wildfire risk reduction and carbon sequestration



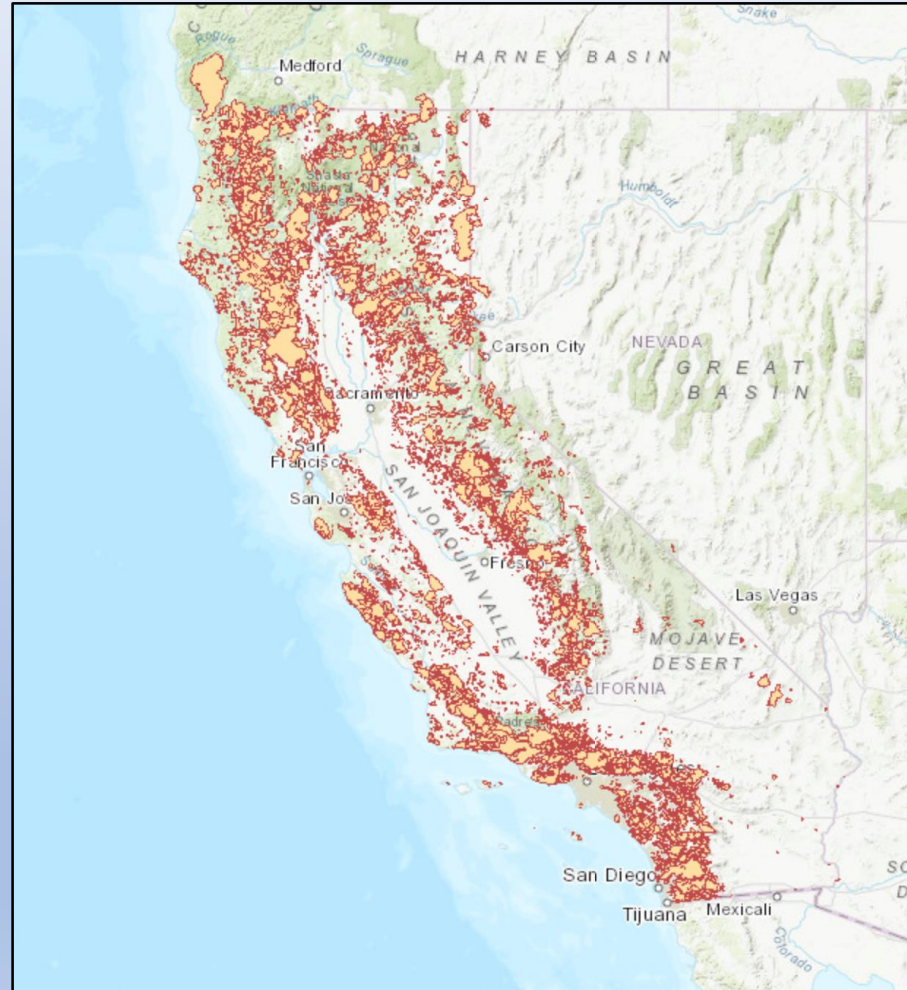


## Where it came from – Wildfire History, Fire Will Happen

Regional Wildfire Perimeters  
2013 to 2023



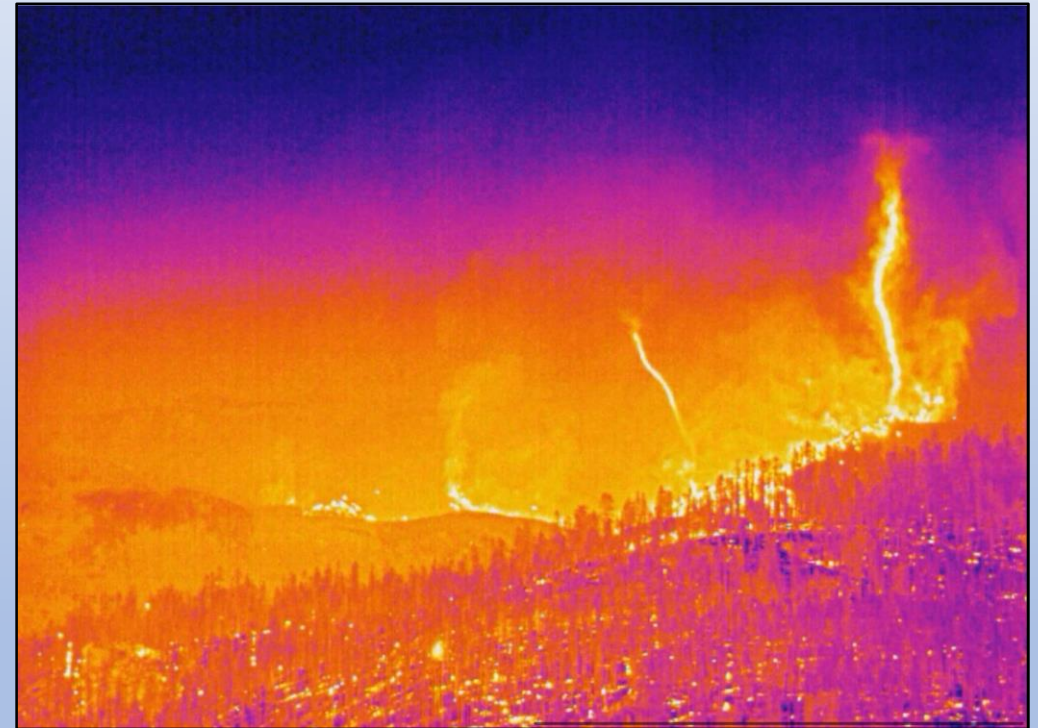
State-Wide Wildfires  
1898 - 2020





## Preventing Uncontrolled Wildfire

These forests will burn, it is an absolute 100% certainty, with the right weather pattern and ignition, from either lightning or most-often humans. It will happen. There are increasingly more situations where, if/when a fire starts and gains momentum, very little to nothing can be done to stop it from becoming a catastrophic fire.





## Where it Came From – Project Design

- **County PC-approved project** – 2001 CUP / CEQA doc
- **Pre-application** – January / February 2021
- **Factor noise, traffic & air quality**
- **Consider surrounding neighborhood**
- **Pre-mitigated** – enclosed, located, travel and entry, building orientation and design
- **Modelled from modern small sawmills** – tried, tested and improved with up to date technology
- **Efficient & sustainable**
- **Environmentally respectful & sound**
- **Supportive CEQA analysis** – confirms approach

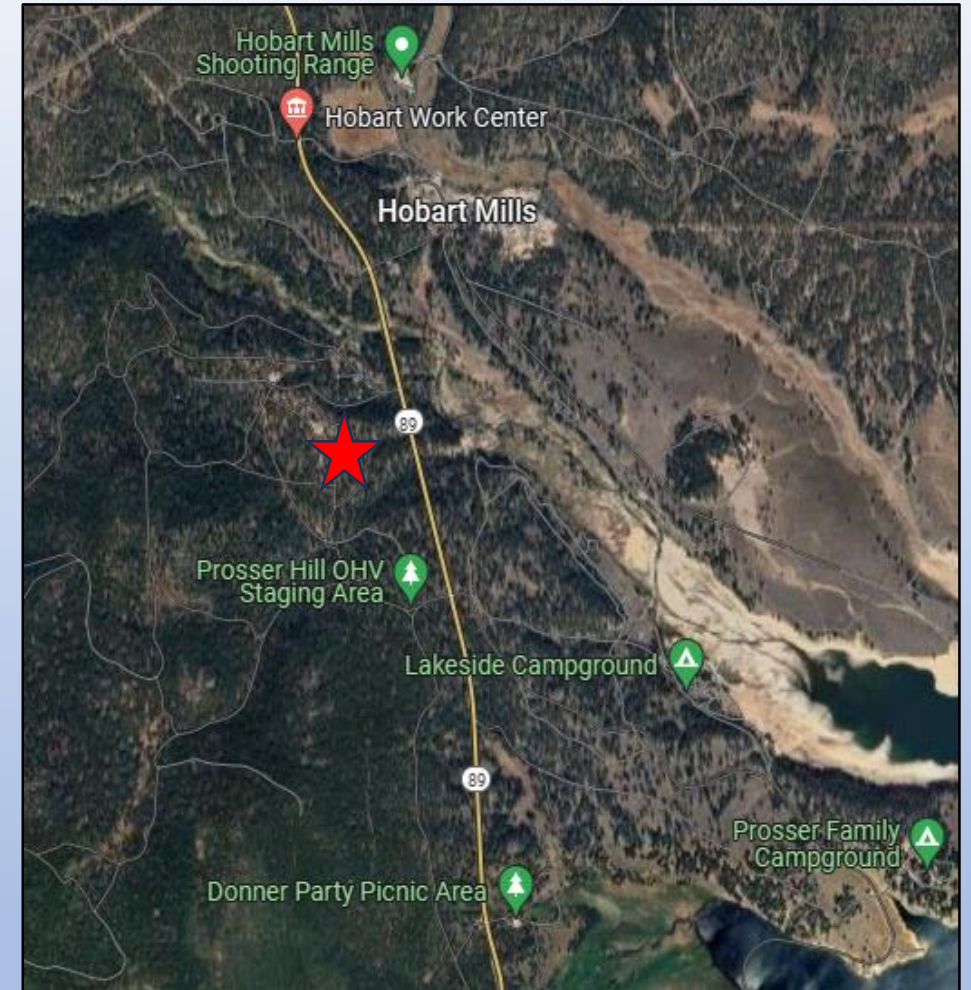
**model project**

- replicate in other forested communities -



## Why Planning Commission Approval – 5-0 Decision

- **General Plan – consistent**
  - ✓ **Foundation & framework** – future development
  - ✓ **Rural Region** – future development within the Forest land use designation considered to be appropriate
  - ✓ **Forest Land Use Designation** – ‘provide for protection and management (including timber harvesting and related operations) of timber resources’
  - ✓ **Goals, Objectives & Policies** – wholly consistent
- **Zoning Ordinance – conforming**
  - ✓ **Forest Zoning district** – ‘provide areas for the protection, production and management of timber and timber support uses’
  - ✓ **Allowed Uses** – sawmill, woodyard
  - ✓ **Zoning standards** – meets all



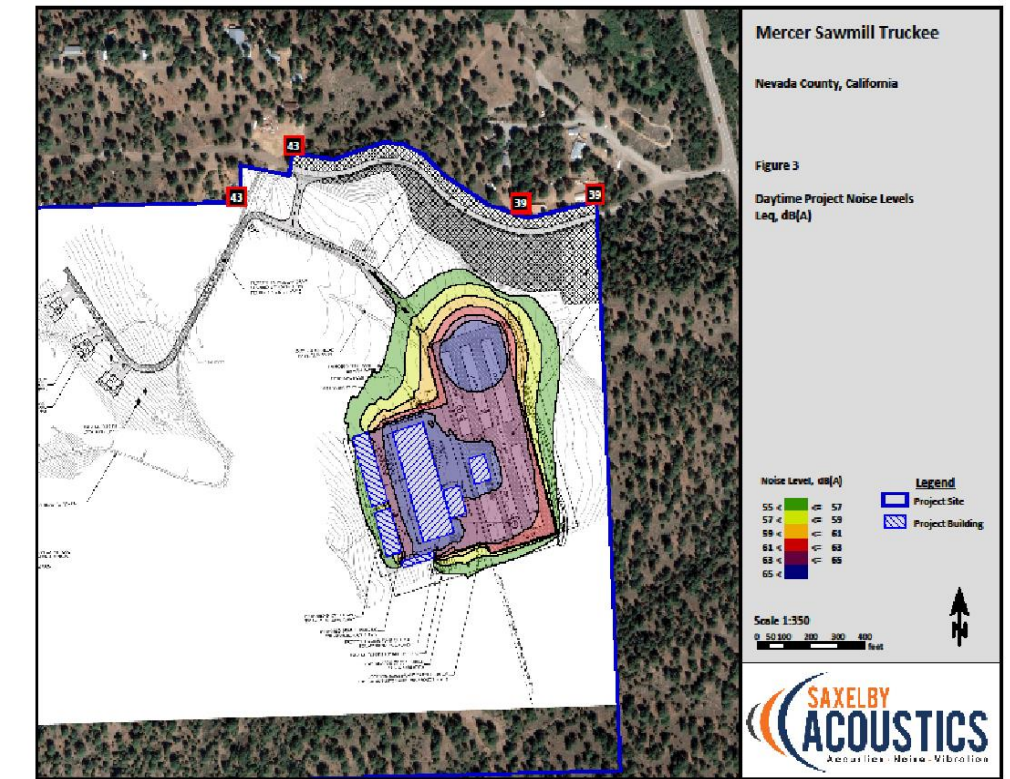
Community  
Development  
Agency





## Why Planning Commission Approval – 5-0 Decision

- **CEQA** – fully mitigated
  - ✓ **Objective & Quantitative Analysis**
  - ✓ **Noise** – county methodology and standards
  - ✓ **Traffic** – county and state LOS / VMT
  - ✓ **Air Quality** – county and NSAQMD thresholds
- **Staff** – support & approval recommendations
  - ✓ **Planning Commission** – approved project, adopted CEQA document



- **Net Conclusion** – approved

- ✓ Necessary
- ✓ Beneficial
- ✓ Appropriate
- ✓ Credible & Trusted

**Day** Noise Level Contours  
55 – 57 dBA average (55 dBA max)  
43 dBA



Community  
Development  
Agency



## Appeal – No Merit, Not Supported By Facts

- **Project description** – accurate, not a multi-phased project
- **Source of materials** – continuing need and ongoing forestry operations independent of the project
- **Noise** – enclosed planar operation, clarity on truck trips hours of operation, “Jake Brakes” mufflers as a matter of state and federal law
- **Wildfire** – more than mitigated (not warranted), project benefits and net risk reduction (on and off-site), unchanged need for forestry operations independent of the project





## Summary

- **Appropriate** – General Plan
- **Conforming** – zoning and zoning standards
- **Supporting CEQA review** – fully mitigated
- **Community Priorities** – forest health, wildfire threat reduction and employee housing
- **Pre Mitigated** – thoughtful planning, consideration of the surroundings and impacts
- **County Planning Staff** – fully support
- **Planning Commission approval** – 5-0 unanimous decision
- **Alpenglow Timber Project** – necessary, beneficial and appropriate

## Conclusion & Outcome

- **General Plan** – supporting policy directive
- **Conditions & Mitigations** – acceptable, as modified in PC meeting
- **Processes & Protections** – many next steps / permitting
- **Findings for Approval** – as outlined by staff, again
- **Project Approval** – as recommended by staff, 5-0 PC decision
- **Appeal Rejection** – as recommended by staff



# Thank You!

**Myself and our project team are ready and more than happy to answer any questions and provide any additional clarity**

